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EPISCOPAL CHURCH CENTER • 815 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

ter H. Boyd, Press Officer
Drew Dearnaley, Assistant Press Officer

Telephone: (212) 867-8400

79402

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CHURCH RESPONDS TO CARTER HUNGER REPORT

NEW YORK -- Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has moved quickly to ask the Episcopal Church's National Hunger Committee to help lead the Church in responding to a Presidential Commission on World Hunger report that asserts the U.S. has a "special obligation" to help eliminate the worst aspects of hunger by the year 2000.

In a letter to committee chairman, the Rev. J. Fletcher Lowe of Richmond, Va., Bishop Allin stated: "Given the gravity of the need and the comprehensive nature of the response, I respectfully ask that the National Hunger Committee study the Commission report, share its findings with the Church and develop a strategy of implementation appropriate to our global Christian mission and our ecumenical partnerships."

The Presiding Bishop's request reinforces a commitment the hunger panel has already made to work with Bread for the World, a nondenominational hunger education group, and the U.S. government to help disseminate the report among non-governmental organizations in the U.S.

In the preliminary report, presented to President Jimmy Carter Dec. 10, the Commission stated that there were "significant reasons for the United States to place the elimination of hunger at the top of its list of global concerns" and called on the U.S. to double the percentage of its gross national product that is devoted to foreign aid.

The Commission called for a radical shift in aid policies away from armament and defense spending toward economic and technical assistance, and it envisions a dollar commitment of about \$14 billion in this area.

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Stating that "moral obligation alone would justify giving the highest priority to the task of overcoming hunger," the panel noted that such obligation included responsibility. "In the Commission's view, the United States has a special capability and hence a special responsibility to lead the campaign against world hunger. The United States is by far the most powerful member of the world's increasingly interdependent food system. It harvests more than half the grain that crosses international borders. Its corporations dominate world grain trade. Its grain reserves are the largest on earth. Because of its agricultural productivity, its advanced food technology, and its market power, the United States inevitably exerts a major influence on all aspects of the international food system."

The Commission asserts that "the issue of ending world hunger comes down to a question of political choice," and adds that "if the appropriate political choices are made the world can overcome the worst aspects of hunger and malnutrition by the year 2000. This end can be accomplished through the alleviation of malnutrition in the world of today, in tandem with more fundamental efforts to build a future world in which hunger will be unknown."

Lowe, who has chaired the Church committee since it was organized in 1976, had high praise for the work of the 20-member Presidential Commission led by special Ambassador Sol M. Linowitz.

"This is a sensitive, well-conceived report that points in what we've felt for a long time is the right direction. It gives real stature to many of our own conclusions and calls for very concrete steps leading to definite goals. I know the other members of the Committee are looking forward to helping the Church grapple with this."

He noted, too, that the Churches were in a good position to help implement the Commission goals. "A major focus of the report is the moral choice which we as a country or as individuals have, and that gives us an excellent opportunity to really dig into the questions of how we perceive and respond to the Gospel."

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questions of how we measure and respond to the danger.

Commissioner. "A major factor in the recent nuclear developments was the security of the United States, and that since we are now in a position to carry out the

the noted fact that the Commission was the first to begin to help in the

for very concrete steps leading to the goal. I know the other members of the Commission are looking forward to making the United States more secure.

is rather with more fundamental efforts to build a better world in which peace will be

This end can be accomplished through the attention of scientists. In the world's history, the world can overcome the worst aspects of hunger and want.

a question of political choice," and adds that "if the Commission's political views are made

The Commission agrees that the issue of ending world hunger is a

the fact of everyday life," the Commission notes that the Commission included technical